Privatisation of steel plants

1111. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are intending to privatise steel plants in the country within a specific time-frame;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the workers of steel plants will be affected by this privatisation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Condition of Chakma Tribe

1112. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the population of Chakma tribe in various States in the country;

(b) whether Government are aware of the sacrifices made by the Chakmas in the freedom movement and in fight against insurgency; and

(c) how do Government feel about the living conditions of the Chakmas and the steps taken to improve their condition?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JUAL ORAM): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Diversion of funds meant for tribal welfare

1113. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that funds allocated for tribal welfare are being diverted for other purposes;

(b) if so, which are the States that are diverting funds allocated for tribal welfare; and

(c) the steps Government contemplate or propose to contemplate to stop such diversion of funds?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JUAL ORAM): (a) and (b) In the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year

ended March, 1998, it has *inter alia* been brought out that scrutiny of the records in selected districts of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, West Bengal and Daman & Diu, revealed that funds aggregating Rs. 85.88 crore which pertain to Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-plan were diverted to other schemes/activities. These observations are based on sample check of documents for the period 1992—98 of the Ministry and the implementing departments and agencies of 17 States and one U.T.

(c) In order to ensure timely utilization of funds provided for the welfare and upliftment of Scheduled Tribes and minimize the scope for diversion of funds, the following measures have been taken:—

(i) Utilization Certificates insisted upon as a pre-requisite for further release of funds.

(ii) Periodic progress reports regarding the status of implementation of schemes are obtained.

(iii) Central Government officers visit the States/UTs to ascertain on the spot the progress of implementation of schemes.

(iv) Meetings/Conferences are convened at Central level with State Secretaries of Tribal Welfare to ensure timely submission of proposals for release of funds and to speed up implementation of schemes.

(v) At the State level, the agencies like Tribal Advisory Committee, Project Implementation Committees of ITDPS at Block levels and Panchyat Samities monitor timely spending of money and effective implementation of Schemes.

Misappropriation of funds meant for tribal development

†1114. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether cases of misappropriation of central funds meant for development of tribal by the officers of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh Governments came to the notice of Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the action being taken by Government; and

(d) the steps taken to prevent such misappropriation of amount in future?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.